Five Factors to Foster Board Unity

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- Sponsorship/Commercial Support: None

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Objectives

• Set expectations and build relationships with board members

• Learn how to address and accept conflict

• Effectively communicate as a team
How united is your board?
Set Expectations
What does it take to be a board member?

• Communicate the length of board positions and the necessary skill sets to be successful in each.
  ➢ Example: The chapter treasurer is a 2-year term. The position requires someone who is trustworthy, detail-oriented and good with numbers.

• This requires fully-developed and defined roles and time commitments.
  ➢ Example: What EXACTLY does this chapter’s treasurer do, and within that 2-year term, how much time can they expect per month?
What support will I have as a board member?

• Officer training and transition support
  ➢ Officer transition meetings
  ➢ “State of the Chapter” activity for each position
    • From your perspective, summarize the “State of your Chapter”
    • Describe New Ideas/Programs implemented during your term
    • Describe your greatest challenge faced
    • What recommendations do you have for the next person in this role?

• Leadership training
  ➢ United Way
  ➢ ASAE
Establish Team Norms

• All group members should brainstorm a list of guidelines that will help create an effective team

• Cross redundant ideas off the list to get a final listing of agreed-upon norms

• Each member of the group commits to living the guidelines, and to telling each other if they believe a group member is violating an agreed-upon group norm

• Distribute the group norms to all team members. Post in the team's meeting room.

• Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the group on achieving its business goals, as well as its member’s relationship goals.
Sample Norms

• **Team members as coworkers**: all team members are equal; every team member's opinion will be thoughtfully considered; each team member will keep all commitments by the agreed upon due date; each team member agrees to constantly assess whether team members are honoring their commitment to the team norms.

• **Team member communication**: team members will speak respectfully to each other; will not talk down to each other; will positively recognize and thank each other for team contributions.

• **Team member interaction in meetings**: team members will listen without interrupting; hold no side or competing conversations; follow the rules for effective meetings; attend the meeting on time; always work from an agenda; minutes will be recorded at each meeting; end meetings on time.
“A goal is a dream with a deadline.”
– Napoleon Hill
Prepare

Brainstorm

Create

Implement

Review

Gather your team, develop goals, have a “what if?” discussion

SOAR activity

Were goals achieved? What needs to be changed for next time?

Assign action items and timelines and begin implementing them

Put your plan on paper and have the board approve it
#2

Build Relationships
Getting to know YOU activity
Additional Relationship-Building Activities

• Non-meeting “meetings”
  ➢ Retreats
  ➢ Officer socials
  ➢ Brainstorming sessions

• Have an ice-breaker activity at every meeting
#3

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate, Communicate!
Send Diverse Messages

• Congratulations to new board members
• Thank you for serving
• What would you like to add to the meeting agenda?
• What meeting dates/times work well for you in the next few weeks?
• Virtual or in-person meetings?
Use Diverse Communication Methods

• Electronic
  ➢ Email
  ➢ Website and Social media, when appropriate to share with members/non-members. This could include “thank you” to previous board members, and “welcome and support” for new board members

• Printed pieces
  ➢ Mail
  ➢ Fliers/brochures

• Word of Mouth
  ➢ Telephone
  ➢ In-person
Celebrate successes openly
Minimize losses

• Make “status updates” a part of each meeting agenda. This asks the board members to report back to the group on:

  ➢ Status of their position
  ➢ Status of their listed responsibilities and goals
  ➢ Whether they need additional assistance with a particular item
  ➢ Whether timelines are achievable, or if they need to be adjusted
Accept and Address Conflict
“Don’t find a fault, find a remedy.”
– Henry Ford
Conflict 101

• Conflict WILL happen with many teams

• A conflict is more than just a disagreement. It is a situation in which one or both parties perceive a threat.

• Conflicts continue to fester when ignored.

• We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions of the situation.

• Conflicts are an opportunity for growth.
Unhealthy Responses to Conflict

• An inability to recognize and respond to the things that matter to the other person

• Explosive, angry, hurtful, and resentful reactions

• An inability to compromise or see the other person’s side

• The fear and avoidance of conflict; the expectation of bad outcomes
Tips to Manage and Resolve Personal Conflict

• Listen for what is felt, as well as what is said
• Make conflict resolution the priority, rather than winning or being right
• Focus on the present
• Pick your battles
• Be willing to forgive
• Know when to let something go
Reward Excellence
Recognition builds pride

• A person who is proud of their experience will desire a continued success of that group/organization

• Proud people want to share their experience with friends and family - Resulting in future leaders and members

• Proud people will forgive faults a lot faster than those who are already upset with their experience
Where can we recognize board members?

• Recognize volunteers that go above and beyond the call of duty
  ➢ Volunteer gifts at major events
  ➢ LinkedIn endorsements and recommendations

➢ Recognize ALL volunteers for their time and service
  ➢ Annual Award Ceremony
  ➢ Quarterly gift card drawings
“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.”

– Henry Ford
Questions?
Upcoming Sessions

• Program Planning 101
• Program Development: Virtual is the New Reality
• Fundamentals of Creating a Policy and Procedure Manual
• Cultivating Future Leaders